previous year is available and the same is given herebelow:-

Period	Incidents of train dacoity
January to May, 1996	45
January to May, 1997	29

(c) Registration, investigation, detection and prevention of crime in the trains is the responsibility of the Government Railway Police (GRP) which functions under the control of respective State Governments/Union Territories Administrations. It is their responsibilities to ensure security of passengers in the trains. The Central Government, however, sends advisories and provides financial assistance to the State Government to strengthen their policing intrastructure.

Desecration of the Statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in Mumbai

1636. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the act of vandalism resorted to by some mischievous elements who desecrated the statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in Mumbai leading to protest action by the dalits and police firing on them resulting in the loss of eleven precious lives and injuries to several; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHAMMAD MAQBOOL DAR): (a) and (b) As per available information, on 11.7.97, at about 05.30 hours it was noticed by some people of Ramabai Ambedkar Colony located on Eastern Express Highway near Ghatkopar that the statue of Dr. Babasahe Ambedkar had been desecrated by garlanding it with a garland of Chappals. Huge crowds immediately collected in large numbers and obstructed the Eastern Express highway. Police Control Room on coming to know about the incident rushed Police Mobiles and available SRPF, Striking Force Mobiles. Available Officers including ACP Vikhroli also reached the spot. In the mean time the mob numbering more than 4000 had become very violent and was indulging in heavy stone throwing on two police vehicles and arson. Two private luxury buses were set on fire. One gas tanker was also attempted to be set on fire but police intervened and prevented a major calamity. The violent mob could not be controlled by requests, warnings and repeated lathi charge. At least 50 rounds were reported to have been fired in which 10 persons were killed.

On July 12, police opened fire at Kurla (Mumbai) when a mob attempted to break open some shops, killing one person taking the toll in police firing in Mumbai to eleven persons. The Ministry of Home Affairs kept in touch with the Maharashtra Government to monitor the developments. A judicial Commission of Inquiry has since been appointed to enquire into the incidents. The terms of reference of the Commission of Inquiry include, among other things, whether use of force including firing was justified or otherwise. The matter has also since been discussed in the Parliament during the current session.

Assault on Journalist

1637. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:
SHRI MUKESH R. PATEL:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item captioned "Journalist assaulted" which appeared in the 'Statesman' dated the 24th June, 1997;

(b) if so, the details of the incident; and

(c) what action has been taken against the guilty persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHAMMAD MAQBOOL DAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Journalist in question lodged a complaint with the local police that she had been abused and manhandled with intent to outrage her modesty and wrongfully confined by some members of the management of Times of India. She had further complained that the articles kept in the car had been stolen by the accused persons.

(c) A criminal case has been registered and put to investigation.

Appointments on Compassionate Grounds

1638. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARM. Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of cases of appointments on compassionate grounds are pending in the Department of Rural Development;

(b) if so, the number of cases which are pending since December, 1996 till date;

(c) the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when all the cases would be settled?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU): (a) and (b) At present only one case of appointment on compassionate grounds in the Headquarters office of this Ministry proper and 11 cases in the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, an attached office of this Ministry are pending since December, 1996.

(c) and (d) The above cases could not be settled due to non-fulfilment of prescribed conditions e.g. availability of vacant posts under the prescribed quota for making such appointments etc.

Implementation of National Family Benefit Scheme and National Maternity Benefit Scheme

1639. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Family Benefit Scheme and National Maternity Benefit Scheme are not being properly implemented in certain States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the other action proposed to ensure national minimum standards by all the State Governments?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU: (a) to (c) The National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS) were launched as Centrally sponsored schemes with effect from 15th August, 1995.

These were new schemes and hence a lot of ground work and publicity was required throughout the country. The State Governments took considerable time in grounding the programme and completing procedures and formalities. Releases of funds during 1995-96 under NFBS and NMBS amounted to Rs. 105 crores and Rs. 58.7 crores respectively, which was 68% and 67% respectively of the Budget Allocation, Releases under NFBS and NMBS during 1996-97 were Rs. 106.9 crores and Rs. 67.6 crores respectively, which was more or less the entire provision available for the year. However, expenditure reported by the States was at a lower level. This indicates that implementation of these two schemes has to significantly improve.

The Ministry has taken several steps such as meetings with State Ministers in charge of NSAP, individual review meetings with the State Secretaries, discussions on perceived impediments to successful implementation of the schemes in the Central Advisory Committee on NSAP and special publicity campaigns.